



## **City of Gaithersburg Press Release**

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### **For Immediate Release**

### **Employee/Team Awards Presented to Siobhan Halmos & Internet Ticket Sales Team**

**Gaithersburg, MD – (February 24, 2020)** At the Mayor and City Council meeting on Tuesday, February 18, 2020, Recreation Program Supervisor Siobhan Halmos and the Internet Ticket Sales Team were presented with Employee Recognition Awards for the fourth quarter of calendar year 2019.

Made up of peers from each department, Gaithersburg's Employee Recognition Committee (ERC) reviews nominations for individuals and teams on a quarterly basis. These winners are then eligible for the annual Employee and Team of the Year Awards.

Siobhan Halmos, Program Supervisor with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture, was named Employee of the Fourth Quarter for her consistent leadership of some of the City's largest sports programs, including Golf Tournaments, Fall and Spring Boys and Girls Soccer, and Boys Basketball. She also coordinates Softball and SportsFest, schedules and supervises the complex transportation network for Summer Camps, and reserves school facilities to be used by the entire Department throughout the year. Siobhan mentors new staff and takes the lead each winter to recruit, interview and hire new staff for the Basketball program. She is dedicated to her work and is committed to ensuring that City recreational programs are successful.

The Internet Ticket Sales Team, comprised of Suzanne Takahashi of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture, Brian Helms of the Department of Information Technology, and Frank Johnson of the Office of the City Attorney, was named the Team of the Fourth Quarter. In early 2019, staff learned from patrons that ticket reseller Event Ticket Sales, LLC was using the Arts Barn's domain name to direct patrons to purchase online Arts Barn performance tickets through the Event Ticket Sales website. Arts Barn Program Coordinator Suzanne Takahashi and Business Systems Division Manager Brian Helms investigated the matter and contacted Deputy City Attorney Frank Johnson, who found that a new Maryland statute, the Interference with Internet Ticket Sales Act, prohibited using the Arts Barn name in this way as a deceptive trade practice. When requests to the unauthorized vendor to stop the practice were ignored, Frank contacted the Maryland Attorney General's Office, and Suzanne, Brian and Frank then worked with the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division to investigate and prosecute the case.

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## **2 – 2 – 2 /Employee Awards**

A trial was scheduled for December, with Suzanne and Brian ready to testify, but the Attorney General entered into a settlement agreement. Event Ticket Sales, LLC agreed to stop their ticket reselling and pay a \$50,000 fine to be used for restitution. The Attorney General's Office thanked Suzanne, Brian and Frank for their work on this issue. "We are pleased that consumers affected by Event Ticket Sales...will receive restitution as a result of this settlement," said Attorney General Brian Frosh. "Most importantly, this out-of-state company will be required to make changes so Maryland consumers are not misled in the future."

For more information on the Employee Recognition Awards please contact the Office of the City Manager at 301-258-6310 or visit the City's website at [www.gaithersburgmd.gov](http://www.gaithersburgmd.gov).

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